THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI ASHOK PRADHAN): (a) The category-wise net outstanding telephone dues and the numbers of subscribers are as under:—

Category	No. of Subscribers	Outstanding dues (Rupees in thousands)
State Govt.	5426	5700
Central Govt.	2233	805
Defence Deptt.	Nil	Nil
Private	302904	362492
TOTAL :	310563	368997

(b) Consequent to the corporatisation of service activity through Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, recovery of dues is a commercial matter, decisions on which have to be taken by Bharat Sanchar Nigam Limited, and not by Government. The Company has been taking suitable steps, e.g. disconnection of telephones, with the exception of exempted category, and legal proceedings against the defaulting subscribers. Disconnection of other telephones of the same subscriber for recovery of dues against the defaulting telephone number is also resorted to.

Changes in working of post offices

3030. SHRIMATI AMBIKA SONI:

DR. T. SUBBARAMI REDDY:

Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether a number of changes have been made in the working of post offices in the country;

(b) if so, whether long delays in Indian Postal System would be made easier by Automatic Sorting Machine;

(c) if so, the steps Government propose to take to make the working of post offices more economically and quickly under the latest technology;

(d) whether Indo-French Centre for the Promotion of Advanced Research is financing three-year project with a French Institute; and

(e) if so, to what extent these steps have improved the functioning of the post offices in the country?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY (SHRI SU. THIRUNAVUKKARASAR): (a) to (c) Yes, Sir. Automatic Sorting Machines have been installed at Mumbai and Chennai and use of these machines has helped in processing large volumes of mails faster and in an efficient manner which in turn results in faster deliveries to addressees.

To improve front office (counter) operations, the Department of Posts has already implemented a comprehensive technology induction programme with thrust area on computerization and on networking the bigger post offices, major sub-post offices, administrative offices and all pay and accounts offices. Satellite based communication network for money order transmission has been introduced throughout the country. The computer based multi-purpose counter machines have been introduced in large post offices. Induction of these machines has reduced long delays and made postal transactions more efficient and economical.

With a view to optimizing utilization of the postal network, series of value added financial services have been introduced by the department including International Money Transfer Service, sale of Mutual Funds and Bonds, Electronic Fund Transfer Service and Cash Management Services.

(d) No, Sir.

(e) Does not arise in view of (d) above.

Extension of MTNL services to Chennai

3031. SHRI R. KAMARAJ: Will the Minister of COMMUNICATIONS AND INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have received any proposal from the State Government of Tamil Nadu for extension of jurisdiction of MTNL upto Chennai, a well known commercial place in Southern India;

(b) whether Government would come forward to execute the proposal of extension of MTNL;

(c) if so, the details thereof and the time-frame for the extension of MTNL jurisdiction; and

(d) if not, the reasons therefor?